

## Swanson Middle School PTA Membership Minutes

January 12, 2016

PTA President Noah Simon welcomed everyone and reviewed the agenda.

The agenda for the meeting will include:

1. Update from Brigitte Loft, Swanson Principal
2. Discussion with Dr. Barbara Keinmen, School Board Member

### 1. Capacity planning

Swanson formed a capacity committee in August to address over-crowding at the school. The “Marina” (possible name) will be a bank of relocatables located on the current parking lot area near the existing relocatables. We have currently have six classroom relocatables – the embassies – for world language. We decided to put the languages in this space so it would be an equity of experience ( 75% of students take languages.)

Instructionally we made the decision that the 7<sup>th</sup> graders would be in the relocatable for three of their seven classes. Since the 7<sup>th</sup> grade does a lot of inter-disciplinary instruction (e.g. Ellis Island, Rain Forest Project), it made sense to have the students and teachers in a cohesive space helps to promote this collaboration. The building is crowded and this will be an opportunity to spread out - something that our students will benefit from and could ease some anxiety.

The committee has worked hard to come up with a plan. We are considering increasing the grades from three teams to four teams for 2016-17. We did find out after the break that we would not be getting one of our relocatables therefore some changes will be made to the documents presented.

We communicate everything through the website. We encourage everyone to watch this space as we move into implementation: <http://www.apsva.us/Page/31649>

Ms. Loft invited VP Scott McKeown, Swanson Assistant Principal to talk. We have the input from parents and teachers and students. We asked students to complete the Student Capacity Survey November 2015 and 75% of students responded. Please see: <http://www.apsva.us/Page/31649> > Student Capacity Survey for details on the findings.

Review of configuration based on input from the Facilities Team. We reviewed the configuration slide in detail: <http://www.apsva.us/Page/31649> > Updated Relocatable Configuration Plan

1. Team classes will be in the relocatables - includes math, English, History and Special Education
2. Science will remain in the building
  - a. Too much equipment, not feasible to reconstruct all that.
3. Gym/cafeteria annex [gym during non-lunch times]
  - a. Cafeteria is congested so this will relieve some of that crowding

- b. Gyms are also very crowded during certain mods.
  - c. Classroom/Gym Annex – still a question mark as to how we will use that.
4. Office

Other points noted:

- There will be controls on access but the details of security still outstanding.
- Lockers – We have concluded we will leave them in the building. We have arranged it so that even though the lockers will be in the building, 7<sup>th</sup> grade lockers will be on the end closest to the relocatables.
- Languages will be in the building and go upstairs in the Mariners hallway.
- Science Lab – Current three 7<sup>th</sup> grade labs will remain plus add a science classroom.

### **Questions**

Question: What about that annex?

Answer: That unit will go to Abingdon Elementary.

Q: Will each 7<sup>th</sup> grade team will have 3 of their classes in the annex

A: Yes.

Q: With weather, what will happen?

A: Coat hooks available in hallway, Also there will be coverage/awning.

Q: What about tents between the building and units?

A: We did discuss this but it was difficult because of the fire lane.

Q: Are these all new units?

A: The 4-plex will stay and the additional units will be a mix of old and new.

Q: Is there communication capacity from units.

A: Yes, the teachers have phones and walkie-talkies. Please note that for parking, we will lease 43 spaces from the church.

Our expectation is that we will hold into this configuration for about 5 years.

Principal Loft's Report:

- Site Shortcuts > Pedestrian Safety Card [See website]. In a previous meeting, it was requested that we updated this safety card.
- New drama teacher – Monique Caldwell - will do Charlie and The Chocolate Factory. If you have any expertise in set design, production, advertising, etc.. please be in touch with her.

- Starting our academic planning meeting - The academic planning process is beginning. In early February, course selection for 7 and 8<sup>th</sup> graders coming out. Rising 6<sup>th</sup> grade on January 19<sup>th</sup>. School talk going out for rising 7 and 8.
- Science Fair on 28<sup>th</sup>.
- Quarter end 1/29 so now is the time for students to figure out what they need to do if they are not happy with their grades.
- No school Monday February 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Noah Simon welcome Dr. Barbara Keinmen, our school board member liaison school.

*Updates from Dr. Keinmen:*

Capacity – This plan of an internal committee worked well. The Board decided to move that process into the committees and we can see how well that worked out based on this presentation.

Our growth pattern indicates that we are growing and growing quickly. This issue is the large KG, 1, 2 - all are between 2100 to 2200 students. It is not explosive growth but each is bigger than previous years.

But what is most heavily on her mind is high school. In 4-5 years, we will have almost 3000 HS students that we do not have current seats for. That is what we are talking about for the CIP.

Recent School Board decisions:

- We have waived the transfer policy for transfers to Kenmore or Jefferson MS and Wakefield and Yorktown. You get a bus from your neighborhood.
- Plans for building Wilson School site (opening 2019). This project is over-budget. We are building up rather than out which is more expensive. We also have to build a parking garage.
- Plans for Stratford MS. This will house 1,000 students opening 2019. There is a possibility of opening it to only 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> graders in 2019 and grand-fathering 8<sup>th</sup> graders. If this plan moves forward, the Stratford program (approximately 50 students) will remain. This will be an addition to the existing building. It is an important historical sight.
- Dual enrollment will now also be full quality point to your grade average.
- Arlington Tech is accepting applications. It will start with 40 9<sup>th</sup> grade students this fall.
- Plan on paying close attention to the upcoming discussion on high school capacity.
- Regarding the budget, the revenues are not growing at the same pace as the students and we should be thoughtful about how we allocate our resources. The step increases are a priority.
- Transportation is an area we need to look at expanding staff and resources.
- We are not at this time looking at increasing class size.
- We have 5 Swanson teachers that are regularly participating with Discovery education.

***Minutes respectfully submitted by Madelon Brennan, Recording Secretary***